

In the Claims:

Entry of the following amendments to place the claims into condition for allowance is respectfully requested.

1. (currently amended) A tag grouping system, comprising:

parameter storage means for storing a parameter which represents a measure of a strength of relationship among a plurality of ID tags;

parameter adjusting means for increasing and decreasing values of the parameter according a number of pieces of ID information detected simultaneously in the ID tags by a mobile tag reader; and

judging means for judging a plurality of ID tags as belonging to a same group according to values of the parameter stored in the parameter storage means;

wherein when ID information is first detected simultaneously in a pair of ID tags, the parameter adjusting means newly sets the parameter for the pair of ID tags to indicate the measure of the strength of relationship between the pair of ID tags, and when ID information is subsequently detected simultaneously in a pair of ID tags, the parameter adjusting means increases the value of the parameter stored in the parameter storage means.

2. (cancelled)

3. (previously presented) The tag grouping system according to claim 1, wherein when ID information is detected in a plurality of ID tags, the parameter adjusting means increases the values of the parameter stored in the parameter storage means.

4. (previously presented) The tag grouping system according to claim 1, wherein if ID information is detected only in one of a pair of ID tags which has been registered in the parameter storage means, the parameter adjusting means decreases the parameter value of one of the ID tags of the pair of ID tags.

5. (previously presented) The tag grouping system according to claim 1, wherein when a value of the parameter stored in the parameter storage means becomes zero, the parameter adjusting means clears a parameter setting.

6. (previously presented) The tag grouping system according to claim 1, wherein when a value of the parameter stored in the parameter storage means exceeds a predetermined threshold, the judging means judges that the ID tags relevant to the parameter value belong to a same group.

7. (currently amended) A tag grouping method for judging a plurality of ID tags as belonging to a same group according to values of a parameter which represents a measure of a strength of relationship among the plurality of ID tags, comprising:

a parameter setting step of newly setting the parameter for a pair of ID tags when ID information is first detected simultaneously in the pair of ID tags,
and

a parameter increasing step of increasing the value of the parameter when ID information is subsequently detected simultaneously in a pair of ID tags.